

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### Vascular and endovascular surgery, 2nd edition

Jonathan D. Beard, Peter A. Gaines, editors; London; 2001; WB Saunders; 546 pages; \$99.00.

*Vascular and Endovascular Surgery* is one of seven books in a series that serves as a *Companion to Specialist Surgical Practice*. These books are designed to complement a more basic text, *Core Topics in General and Emergency Surgery*. This focused series was written for advanced surgical residents and busy practicing specialists who desire access to up-to-date information on recent developments in their subspecialty practice. As the editors point out, most general surgical texts do not provide enough detailed information for the subspecialist. Many specialty texts are either too expensive for the trainee or not current enough for the busy practicing surgeon. The editors wished to provide a reasonably priced volume that provides succinct summaries of key topics and concentrates on recent developments and current data. They have succeeded admirably. This text is the second edition, coming only 3 years after the first. The bibliography contains articles published as recent as 1999, quite remarkable for a textbook.

A strong point of the text is the focus on the evidence-based practice of surgery. In addition to using recent references, the authors highlight randomized trials, systematic reviews, and guidelines. Summaries of these selected studies are interspersed throughout each chapter.

With the exception of one author (Geoff White), all of the writers are from the United Kingdom. Though certainly not exclusively, many of the references are from the British literature; this provides the American reader with a broader experience. Authors include surgeons, radiologists, epidemiologists, rheumatologists, internists, and rehabilitation specialists. The style of writing is remarkably consistent, given the multiauthored format, with an emphasis on direct declarative sentences summarizing a lot of information.

The chapters on chronic lower-extremity arterial ischemia, carotid atherosclerosis, and aneurysms are comprehensive and well documented. The work on endovascular therapy is up to date and well summarized. The opening chapter on the epidemiologist of vascular disease, detailing the natural history of atherosclerosis, is timely and important. Vascular surgeons need to participate in modification of their patients' risk factors. There is only a limited review of vascular imaging modalities, hidden in a chapter discussing chronic ischemia. Perhaps the next edition will focus on this rapidly changing area. Similarly, there is precious little information concerning hemodialysis access. Perhaps this subject is covered in the text *Transplantation Surgery: Current Dilemmas*, another in the *Companion* series. A firm grasp of the principles of vascular access is critical for the advanced surgical trainee; the busy vascular surgeon in the United States is often deeply involved with this work.

The text provides a well-documented pithy review of the critical information in vascular surgery. The illustrations are simple, the photos and angiograms clear and contemporary, and the tables and algorithms helpful. The editors fulfilled their promise. Residents, fellows, and busy practitioners will benefit from access to this volume.

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### Handbook of patient care in vascular diseases

John W. Hallett, Jr, David C. Brewster, Todd E. Rasmussen; Philadelphia; 2001; Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; 317 pages; \$39.95.

For those unfamiliar with the publication, this is the fourth edition of the Handbook, which has been in circulation since 1982. John Hallett and David Brewster authored the first three editions, and Todd Rasmussen now joins them in this edition. As promised in the preface, this edition reflects the changing times with new sections in endovascular techniques and imaging.

The concept of the book is to provide a clinically sound introduction for the vascular surgical service. Its approach is "soup to nuts," with sections dedicated to pathophysiology, patient evaluation, imaging techniques, perioperative management, and blood dyscrasia, in addition to specific arterial problems. Important studies are well summarized, and therapies are well described, including suggested drug dosages, the care of various wounds, patency rates, and resuscitative steps.

The purpose of this publication is not to be a text for vascular surgery, and the material in these chapters should be supplemented to fully understand the implications of the many topics the Handbook introduces. It contains the necessary information to address most problems seen in a typical vascular surgical practice. Surgical care and significant therapeutic options are addressed in a concise fashion. The Handbook does an excellent job of identifying significant issues and topics, but the style of the book prevents complete development. The complexity of many clinical situations is understated. The goal of this edition was to broaden the scope of the book to include several new topics, which it achieves, but some of these topics are oversimplified. The use of aortic stent grafts, complex reconstructive venous surgery, and subfascial endoscopic perforator surgery are superficially addressed.

Typical of other pocket-sized references, it sacrifices aesthetics and readability in the name of brevity and a smaller size. Chapters are full of useful charts and references.

This is an excellent bedside reference. House officers, vascular fellows, intensivists, and all allied health personnel who encounter vascular patients will benefit from this text. It gives its readers a basic understanding of vascular surgical problems and options for therapies. The information is referenced to a reasonable number of well-constructed clinical trials that should be familiar to trainees and clinicians who are involved in the day-to-day care of vascular patients.

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